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# ***MEDIA ADVISORY***

Louisiana  
Department of State



Al Ater  
Secretary of State

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**October 31, 2005**

## **SECRETARY OF STATE AL ATER SET TO BEGIN CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS WITH SEQUOIA FOR STATEWIDE VOTING SYSTEM**

BATON ROUGE, LA – Secretary of State Al Ater announced today that he will begin contract negotiations with Sequoia Voting Systems, Inc. for Louisiana’s statewide voting system.

“I have accepted the recommendation of Louisiana’s Voting System Evaluation Committee,” Ater said. “Sequoia Voting Systems, Inc. was recommended by the committee following an exhaustive evaluation of all the applicants. The bidders were reviewed based on qualifications that included, but were not limited to: experience, staffing, training, equipment accessibility, security, maintainability, dependability and customer service.”

The evaluation committee was comprised of nine members with extensive experience in balloting, registration, information technology and storage warehousing. “We feel the team that was selected represents every facet of the elections process,” he said. It included a member of the Clerks of Court Association, Registrars of Voters Association and the Attorney General's office. The committee members, whose identity has remained confidential prior to Ater’s announcement carefully evaluated all proposals for the past three months before making a final recommendation to Ater.

The selection of a vendor is only the first step of Ater’s vision for Louisiana’s voting system.

“It is my intention to negotiate and execute a uniform, statewide voting system in Louisiana,” Ater said. “Once implemented, all parishes will vote in exactly the same manner.”

In the spring of 2005 the Secretary of State’s Elections Division sponsored demonstrations throughout the state, showcasing certified system vendors. The demonstrations allowed the public, members of the legislature, clerks of court, registrars of voters and Parish Boards of Election Supervisors to review the respective companies’ machines and submit comments. Five of the seven certified vendors submitted bids.

Following the issuance of the state’s July 12, 2005 request for proposals, the Office of State Purchasing received the five bids on August 9, 2005. The bids were then turned over to the Secretary of State’s Office and the evaluation committee for review.

“This is a decision of enormous impact for Louisiana, not only today, but for years to come,” Commissioner of Elections Angie LaPlace said. “The evaluation committee made its determination in the best interest of the state; based on the information they were provided.”

One hundred percent of the purchase price of the new voting system has been provided through Louisiana’s voluntary participation in the Help America Vote Act of 2002.

**2005 VOTING SYSTEM RFP EVALUATION COMMITTEE  
STATE OF LOUISIANA, DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

National Voter Registration Director, Dept. of State – Lillie Crochet  
Clerk of Court, West Baton Rouge – Mark Graffeo  
Deputy Director, Civil Division, Dept. of Justice – Tina Grant  
Elections Director of Absentee & Field Operations, Dept. of State – Sherri Hadskey  
District 7 Manager, Calcasieu Voting Machine Warehouse, Dept. of State – Darren Martin  
IT Applications Project Leader, Dept. of State – David Myers  
Director of Elections, Balloting, Dept. of State – Frances Sims  
Registrar of Voters, St. Tammany Parish – Dwayne Wall  
IT Director, Dept. of State – Chrissie Weatherford

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